UPADESA SARAM

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Translated from the original of

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

नमो भगवते श्री रमणाय

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SRI NIRANJANANANDA SWAMI
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SRI RAMANASRAMAM (Regd.)
TIRUVANNAMALAI
1952

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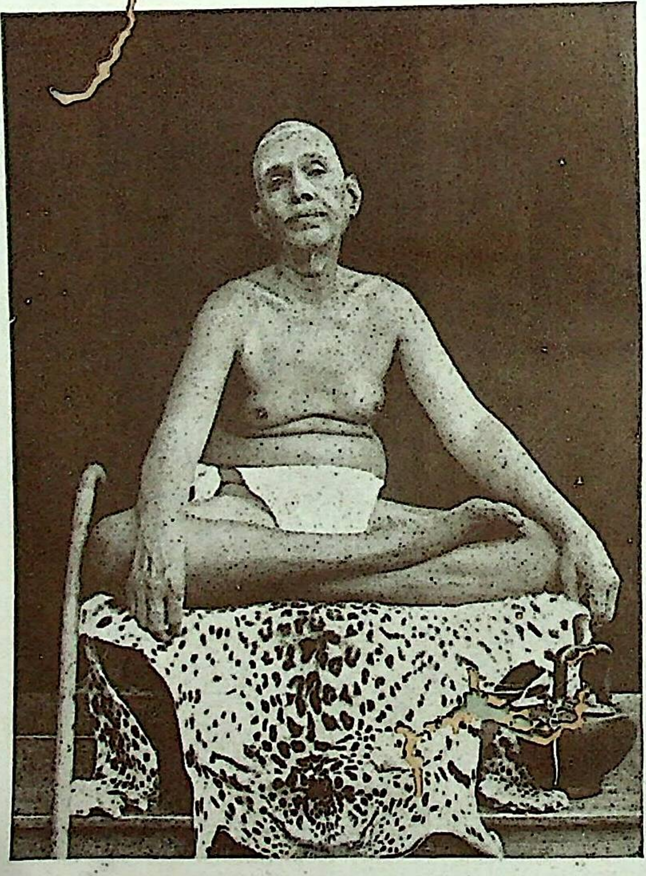

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

UPADESA SARAM

OF

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

COMPLIMENTARY COPY
SRI RAMANASRAMAM,
TIRUVANNAMALAI.

With English Translation and Notes

BY

B. V. NARASIMHASWAMI

REVISED & ENLARGED

Published by

SRI NIRANJANANANDA SWAMI
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PREFACE

When this work of Sri Ramana Maharshi is presented, a few words* of introduction about his life and works may be expected. Born in December, 1879, the second son of Sundaramier, a pleader of Tiruchuzhi in the Ramnad District, he received his early education at Tiruchuzhi and Dindigul and then proceeded to Madura where he studied in Scott's Middle School and the American Mission High School. His relatives and companions noticed nothing extraordinary about him except perhaps his occasional absent-mindedness during working hours. The subject of this abstraction was a mystery to his companions as he did not disclose it to anyone at the time. This strange young man was proceeding, however, without any guidance from books or men, to introspect into his own personality and discover his nature. "Who am I ?" "What am I ?" "Whence am I ?" were the queries which, even as a boy, he had started ; and he had obtained distinct realisation that he was not the mere perishing body but something deep, subtle and suffused with awareness and Reality-feeling. Alongside of this untaught mysticism and philosophy, he had a deep and simple devotion that centred round "Arunachala." With that holy name, which haunted his memory from childhood, he associated all ideas of God—omnipotence, omniscience, holiness and kindness. He had lost his earthly father at an early age, and Arunachala was to him the

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* For a fuller account, see the books noted on the cover.

"Father in Heaven." He did not know where "Arunachala" was till 1895, when a relative arriving at Madura stated that he had just returned from Arunachala. "From Arunachala!" cried the startled young man, "where is It?" The relative was surprised at his ignorance and remarked, "What! Do you not know Tiruvannamalai? That is Arunachala." With such leanings, it is no wonder that young Ramana or Venkatraman—that was his real name—took little interest in most of his studies. Neglect of studies brought on impositions and reprimands from his elders; and these seem to have produced little effect.

On 29th August, 1896, he was writing an imposition from Bain's English Grammar. The work after some time disgusted him; and he bundled up Bain and the imposition paper, and tossing them across the room, sat up, closed his eyes and dived within himself. The elder brother who was in the same room watched him in silence for a while, and then broke out with a rebuke, intended to chasten the young spirit, "What business has a fellow here, who behaves like this?" The rebuke struck home. "True," thought young Ramana, "truly, I have no business here. I will leave home, relations and everything here, for good." Immediately he resolved on going away to Tiruvannamalai—far from his old moorings—and remaining there totally unknown to his relations. He took three rupees out of the money given to him to pay his brother's school fees and took train northward, leaving a note at home which ran as follows: "As I am going to seek my Father by His command, and as the object is meritorious, no sorrow need be felt for this absence and no money need be wasted in searching for *this*" (இதை). The reference in the third person to his body which others regarded as Venkatraman, to the Father who commanded him to quit home and seek Him, and the omission to sign the note are significant of the stage of development he had already reached at seventeen.

While he was in the train, he passed almost the whole of his time till he reached Villupuram, absorbed in his own thought, and unattracted by his fellow-passengers' chat or the variegated and picturesque scenery of Nature. Finding his funds insufficient for the entire journey, he alighted at Mambalappattu and walked the distance of ten miles to Tirukkoilur where he pledged the only ornaments he wore—a pair of gold ear-rings—and again took train for Tiruvannamalai. As soon as he reached that place, he proceeded straight to the temple of Arunachala and there offered himself with these words, "Father, by Thy command have I come here before Thee." Since then up to his *Maha-Nirvana* on the 14th of April, 1950 he had remained, without any break, at Tiruvannamalai in the presence of his "Father," for more than half a century. Here the hill itself is revered as *Jyotir-Lingam*, i.e., God in the form of light.

Ramana spent the first six months in the temple precincts and then removed to a saint's tomb, a mango grove in the outskirts of the town and later still to various caves on the hill. He was then at the foot of the hill, near Paliteertha, by the side of the tomb of his mother (who came and resided with him from 1916 till she passed away in 1922). The first ten years of his life at Tiruvannamalai were characterised by rigorous *Tapas* (penance) including *Mowna* (silence), remarkable *Vairagya* (non-attachment), and an almost perpetual plunge in deep *Samadhi*. His fame as an ascetic began to spread and his relatives came to see him. They entreated hard and bade him return home. But he was adamant and declined to leave Tiruvannamalai.* He then began to get acquainted with many religious works in Tamil and a few in Sanskrit, and as days progressed, he obtained considerable mastery in Tamil. He has written a few original Tamil poems,† which are marked alike by literary grace, passionate devotion and philosophic insight ; and he rendered some standard Sanskrit works‡ into Tamil prose and verse. His replies to disciples are embodied in *Ramana Gita.* His proficiency in other languages is evidenced by the fact that he rendered his own *Upadesa Undiyar* into Sanskrit, Malayalam and Telugu verse. The school of philosophy embodied in his works is Advaita. His main discourse is on the realisation of the Self. Hundreds, and in the month of Karthika (*i.e.,* November-December) thousands, flock to pay their respects to the great soul whom they variously style Ramanaswami, Brahmanaswami, Ramanarishi, Ramanamaharshi and Bhagavan ; and some worship him as God incarnate and offer their praise, repetition of (108) names, waving of lights and food at his feet, or before his picture. Several of the visitors seek his help for solving the riddle of existence and other problems which may be vexing them. To these he offers mostly the hoary instruction : "Know thyself," "Seek the source from which you come." His works also mostly centre round the same topic.

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* Into this village, famous in song and history for the sanctity of its hill and its shrines, crowds of pious devotees, especially Saivites, have daily poured for centuries and taken a keen delight in feeding and serving holy men, in circumambulating the hill, and visiting the shrine of Arunachala. Several of these, almost from the beginning of Ramanaswami's *tapas* (i.e. austerities) have offered him their homage and some have permanently attached themselves to him so that they may serve and feed him and if possible, learn and realise the truths of religion at his holy feet.

† Arunachala Stotras, Upadesa Saram or Undiyar and Ullathu Narpathu and others.

‡ Sri Sankara's Vivekachudamani into Tamil prose and a part of Devikalottaram and Sri Sankara's Dakshinamoorthy stotra, etc., into Tamil verse.

Upadesa Saram is a synopsis, in thirty short stanzas, of the Maharshi's teaching about man's spiritual course. It is constantly sung at the Ramana-Asram by the disciples along with its Sanskrit, Telugu and Malayalam versions and thus serves to fix in their minds the course that leads to realisation of the Self. Importance is attached to the work because it is a short epigrammatic statement, by a man of realisation, as to the method and state of realisation and is well adapted for use as a manual for contemplation. For the benefit of those who have not the time, patience and desire to go through that work, at any rate without a prefatory foretaste, and for those who require matters taught to be summed up, an explanatory summary of the poem is given here.

SUMMARY

Man wants happiness and to attain it seeks and welcomes pleasures. These he gets by 'Karma'* *i.e.*, activity of one sort or another. Hence to a superficial view, it may appear that activity—one's own—confers all pleasures and happiness on one, and that there is no need to look to any other or higher power. This view was acted upon by some *rishis* (*Mimamsakas*) of the Daruka Forest, who trusted entirely to their sacrificial rites to obtain all that they wanted, and failed to honour God in His highest embodiments.† In consequence of such failure, their sacrifices suffered shipwreck, and soon they had to recant their heresy. Even the slightest examination would serve to explode their theory. If they and their 'Karma' (action) did not owe their power of attaining and yielding fruit to any ulterior power, they must be the First Cause, the Prime Mover, the Great Creator, God Himself. The *rishis* did not claim Godhead to themselves; could it be ascribed to their action? Man's 'Karma', being the product of his finite intelligence, is but a feeble and unintelligent instrument. Its force is like any other force, *e.g.*, that of a shell (discharged from a cannon) which is marked by some power while it moves, and reveals its full potentiality when it strikes an object

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* Karma is the intentional action of one with a moral sense, who under that sense acts as a free agent to produce a desired result.

† *i.e.* God Mahadeva and God Maha Vishnu.

—obeying therein, well-established laws—but is incapable of reflection, choice, self-direction, self-development and other features of personality, human or divine. Not 'Karma', nor the man that performed it, but the Great Creator who ordained the existence of man, his power to act, and the law or force compelling such action to produce its results, is to be revered.

It may be fancied, however, by some, that 'Karma' with its immediate and remoter * results can satisfy the human heart. But does it? 'Karma' and the pleasures it yields have an end and a very quick end; they cannot provide the lasting bliss that God alone bestows. God is the goal or 'Home' to which humanity is drawn. 'Karma' or activity, as we find it in the world, *i.e.*, desire-born activity, can never take us on to that goal. On the other hand, it takes one in the opposite direction. Its product, the short-lived pleasure followed by pain, far from wiping off desire through satisfaction, gives it a fresh lease of life, an increase of strength and a deeper and firmer footing in the agent's personality. Acts and attitudes tend to become habits which seize the agent with an iron grip. Desire-born acts thus tend to perpetuate themselves, not merely from day to day and year to year, but also from life to life, endlessly, as the unreaped balance of their fruit and the unexpended fund of Desire—

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* 'Immediate' result is the '*Vasana*,' i.e., the recoil of the action back on the agent, leaving an impression on his nature, character and tendencies.

'Remoter' result is the '*Phala*' or fruit consisting of pleasant rewards for good action, and painful punishments for evil action. Such pleasure and pain generally take long periods to come, and seldom come during the life in which the action occurs. Sometimes, though rarely, they follow close on the heels of action, *e.g.* where it is very highly virtuous or grossly wicked.

*Samskaras**—remaining at the time of death force one to take fresh birth.

The Right Attitude

What then should our attitude be towards 'Karma' or activity? Should we or can we refrain from all action? No. Persons are always acting and impelled to act in particular ways. Their body and mind alike are bundles of Vasanas, resulting from the operation of well established laws in respect of innumerable past acts, and appearing to bind the individual with iron chains.† There is no need, however, for any pessimistic collapse into sluggishness. In each bundle we find intertwined, not merely the operation of laws which man cannot control, but also elements of freedom, which can use those laws to reshape and rearrange the bundle. The Law of Karma, for instance, that like produces like, and that individual acts tend to become habits growing stronger with exercise, is not a law to fear; it is a neutral law. If acts performed with desire for worldly objects develop such desire endlessly, so do acts performed without such desire develop desirelessness, *Vairagya*; and so do acts performed with love of God and in a spirit of surrender to Him develop such love and spirit.

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* *Samskaras* are the seed-forms or potentialities arising from action, which after due time begin to germinate, as desires, tendencies, aptitudes, etc. The term *Vasanas* is generally used as synonymous with *Samskaras*.

† *c.f.* Bhagavad Gita, where we find both sets presented, samples of which are given here. *Those referring to the binding effect of Karma :—*

B. G. III 5.

नहि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातुतिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥

Hence to avoid the ever-lengthening chain of births and deaths, *Samsara* or the ocean of desire-born *Karmic* results, with its perpetual waves of pain and pleasure,

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i.e. None is inactive even for a moment. All are moved to act involuntarily, (*i.e.*) by their innate, ingrained and natural qualities or tendencies.

B. G. III 33.

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यांति भूतानि निग्रहः किंकरिष्यति ॥

Even the learned act in accordance with (*i.e.* under pressure of) their natural and inborn tendencies. All creatures follow their nature. What can (mere) interdiction do?

B. G. XVIII 59

यदहंकारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥

If yielding to your ego (of the present moment) you think that you will not engage in battle, you are mistaken. Your nature (*i.e.* the accumulated Vasanas of the past) will force you (into battle).

Those referring to the elements of freedom:

B. G. VI 5 उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम् ।

Let one raise oneself.

B. G. III 34. तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत् ।

Yield not to the sway of the two (Attraction & Repulsion).

B. G. VII (14)

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।........

Maya (Prakrati) issuing from me, and composed of Gunas, is hard to transcend. But they transcend her, who surrender themselves to me.

B. G. XVIII 63 विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ।

Think on all this and act as you choose.

B. G. XVIII 66.

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।........

Give up all (other) dharma, seek refuge in Me alone; I will save you from all sin. Grieve not.

one should ceaselessly curb desire, confine oneself to unavoidable acts and do these without attachment to their fruit ; and the best practical steps to secure non-attachment are (1) to turn one's love from worldly objects on to God, (2) to surrender every object one has and even oneself to Him, and (3) to maintain this spirit of love, surrender and detachment *throughout*, *i.e.*, alike before and at the time of doing what one has to do and of reaping its fruit. With increasing success in such endeavour, one rises to one's fullest stature in God.

Karma Marga or Path of Works

What are the acts generally performed for this purpose, *i.e.*, to attain the Highest ? They are : (1) Worship (with the body) termed *Pooja*, consisting of ceremonial worship accompanied by external activities ; (2) Worship (with the voice) termed *Japa*, consisting of praise or repetition of the holy name ; and (3) Worship (with the mind) termed *Dhyana*. External * and internal elements are found in all these in varying degrees. This classification based thereon, though a rough one, is still popular ; and Maharshi adopts it and makes a few remarks on each.

The advance of an aspirant in "inwardliness" is often noticeable by his proceeding from a grosser to a finer, from a somewhat external to a decidedly more internal form. The higher and keener one's spirit, the finer and simpler is his method of approach, his *Sadhana*. In the beginning of his turn from worldliness, an aspirant may take to ceremonial worship, especially at holy places like Kasi or Rameshwar, and be very keen on procuring numerous accessories of worship, *e.g.*, silver images, and baskets of sacred basil or 'bel'. But later, less emphasis is laid on these, and more on the praise of God with thrilling hymns and songs. Later still, even these are left behind, and bare repetition of the sacred name (*Japa*) is felt to be distinctly more advantageous and efficient. Next, this also drops off, and all the aspirant's heart and soul are poured out in a purely inward flow on God, drawing him more and more into God, and transforming his indirect and mediate perception into immediate intuition —through meditation (*Dharana*), concentration (*Dhyana*), and absorption (*Samadhi*). All this is tersely summed up by Maharshi in his remark that the order of progress is : *Pooja, Japa,* and *Dhyana* which ends in *Samadhi.*

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* The words 'external' and 'internal' are based on the supposition that the body is one's self and that the mind is something spatial, inside the brain. Though these are unwarranted assumptions, they are of use in practice to the aspirant and mystic.

Hints on Meditation

Early attempts at meditation are generally unsuccessful and result in short, broken, uneven, and taxing spells of concentration. But with bold and unflinching perseverance, one can reach the stage where meditation will be a prolonged, continuous, even, unstrained and joyous flow—in fact, it would become as natural and unperceived as respiration. Early attempts at meditation, again, are generally on some form of God—felt, at first, to be other than the meditator, and far away. But with increasing intensity of devotion, the distance diminishes* ; and when

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* Four stages of advance typifying this diminution are clearly expressed in Sanskrit, thus :—First, '*Salokya*' where the devotee is 'co-sphered' with his object of worship ; second '*Sameepya*' where the devotee is on the threshold of Divinity, thirdly '*Saroopya*' where the devotee takes on more and more the form and attributes of that object ; and lastly '*Sayujya*' where he unites with or merges in God.

God is literally seen everywhere and everything is seen to be but God, He is felt to be near, very near, inside oneself and finally identical with one's Self. When the idea of "otherness" vanishes, God Personal has become Impersonal; one's ego or personal self also has become impersonal; and both merge in "The One", "The Nameless", "Boundless Being". This truth inculcated in the schools of Advaitism or Monism is amply borne out by and realised in the actual experience of Mystics*.

The Four Paths

As for ways and means to reach union with God or the Real, there are said to be four paths styled, *Karma, Bhakti, Yoga* and *Jnana,* which may be roughly described as (1) the Path of Works or Activity; (2) of Devotion; (3) of Mind Control and Union; and (4) of Inquiry, Wisdom or Illumination. In practising any one of these methods, elements of the other paths are often freely mingled up. The paths coalesce. They all adopt, says

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* The term 'Mysticism' is used in a number of senses. In this book, it is used to denote the system wherein the aspirant seeks to get and gets direct, immediate and blissful contact with God or the Real, through intuition. As an example, Lord Tennyson's mystic experience may be cited. He thus described it in a letter to Mr. B. P. Blood:—

"......a kind of waking trance, I have frequently had, quite up from boyhood, when I have been all alone. This has generally come upon me through repeating my own name two or three times to myself, silently, till all at once, as it were out of the intensity of consciousness of individuality, the *individuality* itself seemed to *dissolve* and fade away into boundless being: and this, not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, the weirdest of the weirdest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction, but the only true life.....I am ashamed of my feeble description. Have I not said the state is utterly beyond words?......"

Maharshi, the common formula : "Seek the Source, and rest absorbed there." †

The Path of Yoga

Some observations have already been made about *Karma Marga* or the Path of Works. One may next dispose of the *Yoga* Path or at least of what is considered by some to be its chief distinguishing characteristic *i.e.*, the attempt to control mind through control of breath. One may ask what breath has to do with the mind. But it is the experience of many that an even breathing accompanies an even flow of thoughts, a ruffled breathing accompanies mental disturbance, and that an attempt to steady a ruffled mind by severe control and regulation of breath is successful. And the reason is not far to seek. The root of all spiritual success is a well developed and unified or one-pointed will; and this development or unification can be obtained by exercising the will either about respiration or about any other matter which the will can influence. In the case of concentration on respiratory control, however, there is a great advantage. Respiration, vegetative life and thought are the outflow of one evolving life-principle ; and respiration is a matter of urgent importance for the continuance of life. Any checking or regulation of it must naturally draw the mind away from all matters over which it may be fretting or brooding. Whatever the explanation, there is the fact that breath-control leads to mind-control. But this control is only temporary. It just lulls the mind for a while, but provides no permanent cure for the mind's perpetual restlessness, and until such a cure is effected, one cannot enjoy permanent peace.

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† c.f. Brahma Sutra. I (i) जन्माद्यस्य यतः which means 'Brahman (or God) is that whence all this Universe arises, in which it is supported and into which it returns,' and Chandogya Upanishad III 14-1 तज्जलानिति शांत उपासीत —which means calmly worship That as the Source, the Stay and End of all this Universe.'

Misconceptions and Needless Fears

What then is the step or expedient to be adopted? Before discussing it, one may note in passing, the term employed to describe this permanent cure for restlessness. It is often described as *Manonasha,* i.e., destruction of the mind, and of the 'ego' or 'personality'; and this has created needless confusion and terror. The reader may be assured that the aspirant is not called upon to become crazy or lunatic or to commit mental or spiritual suicide, but rather

> " ....to hope, till hope creates,
> From its own wreck, the thing it contemplates."

The extract from Lord Tennyson on a previous page will show that personality and consciousness are not lost in the process of the highest realisation, but broadened, deepened and transformed (on such a gigantic scale as to produce at first a 'weird' impression) into the clearer and broader life of Illumination,—"the only true life," where death is impossible. It is the 'restlessness' and other defects and limitations of the mind that are destroyed and not the mind itself or the person himself. Other terms employed in describing this process of realisation, which might shock some, are clear references to the disappearance of God Personal and of devotion to Him, and to the apparently audacious claim of the individual worshipper to be He—nay more, to be the Impersonal Brahman which absorbs and swallows up both the worshipper and the God he worships. There is, however, no need to be shocked. Maharshi and all mystics fully recognise that so long as the sense of duality, *i.e.* of one's being a separate individual, is retained, one must revere and worship God and that this worship itself is the means for attaining the greatest benefit. It is the experience of many mystics that the God Personal that they worship takes them on to the Impersonal Brahman *i.e.* to the apparent loss of the individuality of themselves, and of Personal God. What "true life" is (without personality, as we know it) need not frighten or worry us, when we are still in the dualist stage. Sufficient unto the day is the work thereof. Having trusted to God and to the guru, we are in safe hands—and if the guidance received takes us to the Impersonal, we feel also fearlessness and Bliss as part of that crowning achievement. That assurance is given by Scripture and is confirmed by the actual experience of Maharshi and other great men of light. Spiritual guidance prepares the way to Impersonal realisation by gradation of steps which makes the change almost imperceptible; *e.g.* one is asked to worship God not as existing in a single form or body or under a single name, but in all the objects of the Universe; and when reverence is transferred to the entire universe and all objects in it, one's religion becomes impersonal.

Another example of the gradation of steps is furnished by the life of Swami Vivekananda who was strongly under the influence of Dualism and the need for a Personal God, "a hand-breadth off," *i.e.* distinct from himself—till the miraculous touch of his guru made him realise that differences of individuality are not as certain as they first appear and that the truth is that differences exist only to be swallowed up in a strange and mysterious manner in the One Real. Vivekananda for sometime clearly perceived that a cart, its horse and driver were really one, that his leaf-plate, the food thereon and himself, the eater, were one and wondered who it was that was eating.

Loss of individuality, far from being a shock to devotees, is by no means an uncommon experience among them. Many lose themselves daily in their meditation on God. A Gopi's* intense love carried her, as Sri Krishna Chaitanya's carried his devotion, to the point of identification of the self with Sri Krishna (God). This is neither shocking nor irreligious but the height of devotion; and hence the loss of oneself in the Impersonal is justly described by Maharshi as the perfection of Devotion.

Now for the method of securing permanent peace for the restless mind: Frequent efforts to secure a temporary lull have their use in preparing the mind for its final course. But the *coup de grace* that completes the course is chaining the mind or rivetting it to That which knows no change—God, Brahman, The Real or what other name one may give to That 'Nameless.' The weak and finite mind gets paralysed in gazing at that Infinite with awe, and "drops head foremost in the jaws" of That Boundless Being. This process termed by Maharshi *Eka Chintana*† takes different shapes with different mystics but the result is the same.‡

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* A lady-devotee of Sri Krishna belonging to the cow-herd caste.

† See infra, verse 14 of the Sanskrit version.

‡ See pages 30, 46, 48.

Path of Devotion

As mentioned already, devotion is a powerful instrument, and in the case of vast masses, the only instrument to take them on to their spiritual goal. *Eka Chintana,* i.e. concentration on the one, in the case of devotees is on God Personal ; and this is quite as efficient as any other method. Maharshi refers to it here, treating it as a very good preparation for the next Path, that of Inquiry, which is his chief method or Path.

And it is to the latter Path that the main drift of this poem and of other works of Maharshi is devoted.

Path of Inquiry or Illumination

(*a*) *Bars and Qualifications:* Maharshi does not regard any considerations of sex, age, caste, creed, race, literacy or position as bars to one's entering on this path. The only qualification demanded is seriousness, an earnest desire to learn and realise the Truth.

(*b*) *Discipline and Regimen:* Maharshi imposes no disciplinary regulation on the aspirant, but recognises the great value of *Iswaropasana* and *Dharmacharana,* i.e. devotion to God and ethical behaviour as valuable helps to purify and strengthen the mind. When the aspirant starts on this path, his first step is to sit quiet and draw his senses and mind away from all worldly objects. The withdrawal of the body from physical contact is fairly easy but the mind cannot be so easily withdrawn. It has been running after desired objects and a mountain-load of the consequent *Vasanas* or tendencies has accumulated, the expulsion of which is no joke. One may close his eyes and try concentration of mind, but it jumps outward all too soon, recalling familiar images of objects of desire. In this arduous task, ardent devotion to God, supported by strictly ethical conduct* is a great help, as it keeps out attractions of the external world and fixes the mind on the one thing, pure and inspiring. This help is often mysterious and is termed *Iswara Kripa, i.e.* Grace of God. It leads one also to seek and serve a Guru ; and *Guru Kripa*† *i.e.* grace of the Guru is a factor that greatly helps or even accomplishes Self-Realisation or God-Realisation which is the goal of this path and all other paths.

(c) *The Graded Steps :* The aspirant has to begin his practice at a quiet, clean and solitary place, free from troubles and distractions. Then he has to shut out contact of his senses with, and withdraw his mind from, external objects. The next step is to bridle that mind, totally overcoming its restiveness, and making it a docile servant that will simply carry out the behests of the higher will. In practice, this is generally achieved by fixing the mind on God, *i.e.*, the form of Personal God that makes the most forcible appeal to the aspirant. But to another type of mind, the contemplation and metaphysical analysis of one's self are found more suitable and efficient. Maharshi deals with this type of mind here; and *Jnana Vichara* or "Inquiry into Wisdom" is the name given to its progress along this line. To such a mind, when it has withdrawn itself from external contact of every sort, the most appropriate subject for contemplation is itself. Unless it is ceaselessly directed on to itself, it will fly out to objects of desire. So engage it perpetually on these questions "Who am I?" "Whence am I?"

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* especially the development of the virtues known as शम Control of mind, and दम Control of the senses. उपरति Forbearance. तितिक्षा Endurance. श्रद्धा Earnestness ; Faith, and समाधान Equanimity and One-pointedness.

† *Guru Kripa* (*i.e.* grace of the Guru) and grace of God may appear to most people totally distinct. But to those who have thoroughly identified their Guru with God, (and even the Upanishads extol such identification) there is no distinction. The Guru's grace cannot but be God's grace ; and whatever grace is received is immediately felt to be the boon of the God-Guru or Guru-God. There are degrees of grace, *e.g.* by the Guru's grace, vices are checked, passions are cooled down, interest in the world pales, and the mind gets sensitive enough faithfully to reflect the Real. As the last, *i.e.* Realisation of the Real, is the highest point of Attainment, some confine the term "grace of the Guru" to some visible or invisible act of the Guru by which perfect Realisation descends on the disciple. The more implicit one's belief in the divinity of one's Guru, the quicker and surer one's Attainment.

These are very hard questions—which cannot be answered off-hand. They require the most strenuous attention of the concentrated mind. The attempt to face an apparently insoluble problem has a definite psychological benefit. The fore-consciousness would soon stop working at it; but the sub-conscious would take it up and spend its unseen and immeasurable force on it night and day,—aided or lit up especially by faith in the declarations of Scripture confirmed by those of the Guru.

The Vedas and Vedanta have poured forth the reply to these queries in their *Mahavakyas*, literally, "grand utterances" or gems of speech, (1) *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*: All this (Universe) is Brahman; (2) *Prajnanam Brahma*: Pure Consciousness is Brahman; (3) *Tat Twam Asi*: That (Brahman) thou (individual soul, or aspirant) art; (4) *Aham Brahmasmi*: I am Brahman; (5) *Ayam atma Brahma*: This Self (Atman) is Brahman. With these ringing constantly in his ears and stored up in the chambers of the sub-conscious and gathering great momentum there, an aspirant trying ceaselessly to explore into his own nature is bound at some stage to pass into "a kind of waking trance" with his fore-consciousness apparently arrested. Then will the truth come out with its explosive force and make the aspirant see it, hear it, feel it, and be it. Faith* has turned them into sight, vision or Realisation.

Such flashing forth of the Real is vouchsafed to very few. The majority of learners are obliged to toil through a prolonged and trying course. They have first to accept the teachings of the Guru and Scripture on trust, though to a soul without faith they may appear to be a hopeless jumble of meaningless assertions, absurdities and self-contradictions ; but as they go on gathering bits of experience and wisdom, the jumble appears to be a system, the absurdity appears self-evident truth ; and all contradictions vanish in a blaze of wisdom.

Hints for Practice

How is one to set about this long and arduous course ? What practical hints are available to help one of the path ? Maharshi reminds most people of the universally accepted truth that to a person totally unfamiliar with the way, when no way is visible, or numerous and widely divergent tracks puzzle the wayfarer, the safest course is to ask one that knows and if possible secure him as one's guide for the entire journey, and that as such a guide is termed the Guru* (or *Marga darsaka*—shower of the path), the general run of people must early in their course prepare for, seek and obtain a Guru in whom their unwavering faith must be placed. The Guru knows which path suits the aspirant and what directions should be given and what steps taken at each stage.

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* As Swetaswatara Upanishad in its last stanza says :— "To one who has perfect faith in God and equal faith in his Guru, the inmost secrets of the Vedanta enshrined in the Upanishad flash out."

If a person has heard that the *Atman* (or Self) is some glorious and blissful substratum of all that lives, moves or exists or has read about it in the Vedas or Vedanta and wants to learn more about It and pick his way to It, he goes to some one who, by repute or otherwise, is considered the most likely to know all about It and impart his knowledge to the earnest seeker. Indra,* a god and Virochana, an asura (demon) had this desire to know and they approached their progenitor, Prajapati who told them that *Atman* is the 'self' and made them discover it for themselves. "Do you not see your-*self* in a mirror when grandly and joyously attired?" was the first direction given. The pupils were asked to see if the 'Bodily Me," the physical body, the *Annamaya Kosha* (*i.e.*, food-sheath) was the Self. The asura was satisfied with the explanation and went his way. But the god Indra found that the body was not a source of unalloyed or permanent bliss and went back to the Guru to seek a more correct solution. He was next asked to try if the self in the dream-state was the Atman and failing that, whether his mind, reason and personality were the Atman ; and when he found all these unsatisfactory, he reached the real Atman as Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The sage Bhrigu* was taught a similar lesson by his father Varuna, when he asked the latter, what that glorious, much talked of "Brahman" was. The latter described it as the "source and substratum, the stay, and ultimate goal or state of all that exists in the universe," and asked the pupil by *Tapas, i.e.*, the austerity of severe thinking, to discover what that was. Bhrigu first took food (matter) to be Brahman, and next tried if life-breath, mind and intellect would be correct solutions. Failing all these, it dawned on him, that there was an indescribable state of Bliss, beyond all these four rejected forms, transcending the manifested universe, which consequently may be styled the source, stay and end of the universe ; and that *That* must be Brahman.

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* *c.f.* Chan. Upan. 6 XIV 2. आचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद He that has a Guru known,

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्

Mund. Up. I 2 12, To realise that, one should approach with fuel in hand, a Guru versed in Scripture, and steady in his realisation of the Self.

† *c.f.* Ch. Upa. VIII 7-12.

Maharshi asks the earnest aspirant similarly to face the questions "Who am I ?" "Whence am I ?" Almost everyone, when asked who he is and where he is, points to his body even by touching it. The first answer then is "'I' am the body." Then he is asked to think further about himself and verify the answer. Do we not find outer sheaths or shells in nature covering (and therefore serviceable to or connected with) the inner life, but by no means to be identified with that life ? Are you not feeling that you are something living and intelligent or conscious ? The body, now alive, will be a corpse or a cast off slough at some time. Can it be "I" then ? So the first solution is shown to be faulty. Other solutions are then tried ; and one pursues one's quest of the "I" or self by rejecting mere outer appendages and excrescences, to reach its inmost reality, the essence. "Am I not the senses ?" But the senses are part of and suffer the same fate as the body. "Am I not the life-breath or life ?" The pupil then is made to see that trees have life and that he is more than vegetative life. "Am I not the mind, and intellect then ?" the pupil might ask, and fancy he has arrived at the truth of his self at last. But the quest is not yet ended. The mind and intellect are after all instruments wielded by something else. They are possessions which are now held, now lost, and again regained ; and they are not the possessor. Then the pupil concludes that his soul *Jiva* or personality is that possessor. Then he is made to feel that his answer is right, if he dives to the heart or core of personality* and identifies himself or his "Self" therewith. He is *That*.

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* Tait. Upa. III 1-6.

What is the core of one's personality ? One discovers by strenuous striving that his ultimate essence is "being". He cannot but be. At the same moment, he feels that he is awareness or aware that he "is". "I am" and "I am conscious" co-exist as two aspects of the One. Awareness exists. Existence is self-conscious. That which is, is also aware. So Being-Consciousness (*Sat-Chit*) is the core of the soul or self. Internal analysis and discovery cannot go beyond this.

Next starting to analyse the external, when one dives into its core (the Unity behind everything in the Universe), all names and forms are lost. The aspirant soul starts with its devotion to God* and at that stage it feels that there are three entities existing,—(*a*) one's self, marked by intelligence and powers circumscribed within very narrow limits; (*b*) one's God marked by these attributes in infinite proportion, *i.e.*, without any such limits and (*c*) the world or universe of inert unconscious matter.

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* Atman (*Prattyak Atman*) is the name given to the core of personality, the ultimate residuary self that is arrived at by internal analysis.

"Diving to the Core" is not physical penetration or chemical analysis; it is a drive to reach the inner essence or essential basis, by rejecting superficial adjuncts or attributes which are later developments and by that very fact shown to be non-essential. The inert universe (*i.e.*, the universe of name and form, apart from its uncreated essence) is first easily eliminated, as it is the creation or manifestation of God. Its core is taken by the Jiva to be God Personal. Next the core (1) of this Jiva and (2) of Personal God is sought and is found to be respectively (1) the Atman and (2) Brahman† or Impersonal God. Then the inquirer who has gone so far sees the identity of that Atman and that Brahman. This identity was expressed by ancient seers by the Mahavakya **अयमात्मा ब्रह्म**. This Atman is Brahman. The One Real is that which underlies the self within and all that is outside. The inquirer has, at this stage, reached the realisation of unity or Advaita and become really a Jnani. God is the same there as the individual worshipper. Being is felt to be the same as Awareness. Self-Realisation can be equally described as God-Realisation, as "Being That", "Knowing That" or merely "Being-Consciousness-Bliss". That is bliss, because in that state none of the pain that characterises sensation and ideas arising from the senses and the unillumined mind can remain. It is thus *Sat-Chit-Ananda.* This is the end of the course which began with attempts to answer the questions "Who am I?" "Whence am I?": The mystic inspired with faith in the Vedas, God and his Guru arrives at the same realisation without all this ado by merely diving within himself, his "Heart" or core.[*]

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* God *i.e.*, God Personal is the name applied to the empirically perceived Power whose attributes are generally agreed to be omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, kindness, love, etc., and who is pointed to as the highest from one's ethical and æsthetic nature.

† Brahman is the name given to the ultimate real arrived at by analysis of the external universe.

The first effect of such mystic diving is generally one or more temporary glimpses of that "Boundless Being" or experiences wherein the usual prosaic and finite features of the empirical self vanish for a time into brilliant and blissful limitlessness; but the aspirant comes back to his previous state or "mentality" and retains only a memory of his marvellous experience. The *final state* is that Supreme state from which there is no return,[†] where that "true life" is the only life, and always persists. There is no going back from that to the old state; and it is named *Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi.*[‡]

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[*] Maharshi has composed an inspiring Tamil song: "Ayye Athi Sulabham" in which he points out that the aspirant need not fear that the task of realising the Self is very hard and that he can very soon have direct intuition of the Self, rendering doubt impossible (of course, by the grace of the Guru).

[†] *c.f.* B. Gita VIII 21 यं प्राप्य न निवर्तंते तद्धाम परमं मम

[‡] For further details see pages 46-48 *infra* and Mary Anita Ewer's "A Survey of Mystical Symbolism" pp. 28, 29 which describes four stages in their order of progress:—(*a*) Momentary mystic experience, *e.g.*, poets' lyrical inspiration, (*b*) Mystic growth and development, (c) The Divine Other, *e.g.* views of Sunrise, flight of birds, etc., (*d*) Abiding mystic experience of a self, unified in itself and with the Infinite.

UPADESA SARAM

உபதேச சாரம்

1. கன்மம் பயன்றரல் கர்த்தன தாணையாற்
கன்மங் கடவுளோ வுந்திபற
கன்மஞ் சடமதா லுந்திபற.

1. *Karma* (Action) bears fruit; for, so the Creator ordains. Is *Karma* God? It is not sentient.

Notes: The term Karma has already been roughly defined (see page 7). But a closer examination of its import and implications and a fuller description are called for when starting the philosophical discourse on that subject in this poem. Does that term denote (1) a state or condition of a creature or (2) the results or forces visible or invisible, issuing out of the creature in that active condition or (3) both? Sometimes it is used to denote both. Some confine it to one or the other. If the result, *i.e.,* rewards or punishments for the activity be deferred for a long time, is it, *i.e.,* (the result), to be treated during that interval as a substance or thing which is separable from and, at least to some extent, independent of the agent as the Mimamsakas among others regard it? The consequences of such a view, *e.g.,* that the fruits of Karma can be transferred by the person performing it, (*a*) by means of a resolve (*Samkalpa*) prior to the performance of the ceremonial, to another, such as the principal (*Yajamana*) who ordered it to be done, or (*b*) by a subsequent oral act or otherwise to any person at the will and pleasure of the agent are freely accepted by many persons of the Hindu and other communities without regard to the theory implied in such acceptance. A third question about Karma is: "Granting that God is the ultimate cause, the Prime Mover responsible for any act producing its moral (or even physical) consequences, does God operate by individual exercise of will in each instance, or only by general laws, and if the latter, does He interfere with their operation in individual cases?" These and numerous other questions arise, as the subject has nowhere been fully and systematically dealt with in any single work of the Hindu Sastras. Whatever the answer to these questions, we may first consider what the doctrine of Karma is and how it is applied.

The doctrine of Karma has thus been summed up*: "Every exercise of the will-power, in thought, speech and action, acts as a moral cause, and confers on the agent an amount of merit or demerit according to the nature of the act performed; and this moral effect influences the subsequent fate of the individual concerned."

"The doctrine of Karma" is thus an ethical or religious doctrine. It has no application to merely "mechanical acts" which do not (or in so far as they do not) involve moral considerations. Such "mechanical acts" bear fruit which is (*a*) visible (*b*) obviously connected with the act (*c*) affecting, as a rule, other or external objects, and not the agent (whether a person or a creature) (*d*) independent of the intentions of that agent, and (*e*) consequently involves no questions of moral judgment upon or reward or punishment to that agent in future births. Maharshi uses the word Karma to denote only such acts as are ordained, sanctioned, or forbidden by the scriptures. The doctrine of Karma is chiefly used in Indian Philosophy to explain the otherwise inexplicable inequalities found in society, and the strange but by no means infrequent spectacle of good men suffering apparently undeserved and inexplicable pain and sorrow, and evil men enjoying apparently undeserved pleasure or happiness. The explanation is given by reference to acts said to have been performed in other births. Thus the Doctrine of Transmigration is closely associated with the Doctrine of Karma.

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* See H. D. Bhattacharya's "Vicissitudes of the Karma Doctrine" in the Malaviya Commemoration Volume, published by the Benares Hindu University.

This and some other purposes, within very definite limits, are served by the Doctrine of Karma. But there are some * who ignore these limits, greatly exaggerate the power of Karma, and in fact make a fetish of it. As mentioned already certain Mimamsaka rishis, hankering after certain temporal benefits, hoped to attain them merely by the adoption of the prescribed Vedic rites in a spirit of self-sufficiency. God (or Mahadeva and Maha-Vishnu) came down and prevented the proper performance and completion of the proposed sacrifices, and thus taught them the truth (of B.G. XVIII, v. 14) that beyond present human effort, there is an element of Divine control (दैवं) in all affairs to account for their success or failure. Yet we find certain verses like those of Bartrihari ब्रह्मायेन कुलालवन्नियमितो and some popular *niti slokas* like, हरिणापि हरेणापि ब्रह्मणापि सुरैरपि ।
ललाटलिखिता रेखा परिमार्ष्टुं न शक्यते ॥

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* Among these, as one may naturally expect are atheists and agnostics such as the adherents of some schools of Buddhism. But Maharshi is not addressing such persons in this poem. The persons intended to be benefited by it (*i.e.*, the *Adhikaris*) are theists with belief in God and the Vedas.

Such attempts to limit God's Omnipotence and depict Karma as superior to God are ludicrous. Maharshi strikes at this delusion with a simple question. Is this power of Karma inherent in itself ?—in which case, it will be God itself. Is it contended that Karma is God itself ? Why, Karma is one of the states or attributes of God's creatures and consequently Karma is created by God, see B.G.* Surely it is ridiculous to implore superiority to creation over the Creator.

2. வினையின் விளை வு விளிவுற்று வித்தாய்
வினைக்கடல் வீழ்த்திடு முந்தீபற.
வீடு தரலிலை யுந்தீபற.

2. The results of *Karma* (Action) pass away, and yet leave seeds that cast the agent into an ocean of *Karma*. *Karma* yields no salvation.

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* यज्ञार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोयं कर्मबंधनः ।
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसंगः समाचर ॥ (9)
सह यज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्व मेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ (10)
देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ (11)
इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्तेस्तेन एव सः ॥ (12)
B. G. III 9—12

The Gitacharya thus declares that Karma is God's creation; that Yajna (Karma) *i.e.*, action after surrender alone is safe as it does not result in bondage, that such (Yajna) Karma should be performed to please the gods (who are the organs of the One God) who will bless the sacrificer with the enjoyments prayed for and that enjoying these after Yajna frees one from Karma.

Notes: One may agree with the view stated in verse 1 that action (Karma) is not God and is insentient and yet feel that (without worshipping action) one may get all the pleasure or happiness that one naturally longs for, by appropriate action. To such a person this verse gives the answer.

Such a person is called upon to pause and reflect on the experience of himself and others. One must think clearly, accurately define the terms used and give oneself correct self-direction. Do pleasures come unalloyed? Do they last long? Are pleasures—or even a good number of them massed together, the same as human happiness? Is happiness the same at all levels of development? Pondering over these questions, with the help of the experience of numerous persons, one sees that pleasures are ever alternating with pains and are all too brief. Pleasures satisfy or seem to satisfy man at his lower or animal level, but soon he sees that they are the result of titillation of senses that wear out, that they sooner or later pall upon the taste and yet leave a sense of unsatisfied, perhaps insatiable hankering, and that happiness is distinct from pleasure, and has various grades,*—rising from the lowest human unit, through various angelic grades to Divine Bliss—which is the "One....divine event to which the whole creation moves."

Increasing experience shows that yielding to the love of pleasure and taking active steps to grasp it are not the way to real happiness, that sacrificing the desire, (especially in an effort to benefit others) often yields more pleasure and happiness, that higher grades and forms of happiness involve greater and still greater sacrifice of desires, and that perfect selflessness *Akamahatatva** is the highest happiness one can attain.

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* For a fuller statement of this, see the Ananda Mimamsa in Tai. Upa. 2 VIII and Bri. Upa. 4 III 33.

Hence Maharshi says that active pursuit of pleasure (which after all is short-lived) endlessly multiplies the seeds of desire in one's soul, entirely corrupts it and takes it away from the grand goal of selfless Divine Bliss to which all sentient creation tends.

'Seeds' are *Vasanas, i.e.,* tendencies to repeat the action of the same or similar sort, (*i.e.,* to do fresh *Karma*) generally appearing as habit, instinct, predisposition, aptitude, etc.

3. கருத்தனுக் காக்குநிட் காமிய கன்மங்
கருத்தைத் திருத்தியஃ துந்தீபற
கதிவழி காண்பிக்கு முந்தீபற.

3. But acts performed without any attachment and in the spirit of service to God, cleanse the mind and point the way to salvation.

Notes: In the previous verse, the low level of allowing oneself to be engrossed in desires has been pointed out, as also the high goal accessible only to those who have escaped the tyranny of desires. But from desire to desirelessness (*Vairagya*) is too steep a precipice for human frailty to scale. Hence Maharshi points out in this verse the steps which will render the transition easier and safer. Desires and tendencies to seek and work out their gratification are deeply ingrained in the body and mind with which each one is born; and man as a gregarious and social creature has a certain love-nature; and for both these reasons some activity and love or desire of somethings are inevitable. The aspirant then should proceed on the lines of least resistance and turn his love on to God and serve Him either directly or through His creatures (including one's fellow human and sub-human creatures) in a spirit of altruism and love. The effect of activity on such lines will be gradually to diminish and finally to wipe off all selfishness, the mark of the brute-level and lead one Godward. As man identifies himself with his desires and the object of his desires, these form his self at each stage. So by following the directions given here,

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* For a fuller statement of this, see the Ananda Mimamsa in Tai. Upa. 2 VIII and Bri. Upa. 4 III 33.

> "Men may rise on stepping stones
> Of their dead selves, to higher things"—
> and to the Highest.

This is progressive self-realisation ending in realisation of God, Atman, or Brahman.

4. திடமிது பூசை செபமுந் தியான
முடல்வாக் குளத்தொழி லுந்தீபற
வுயர்வாகு மொன்றிலொன் றுந்தீபற.

4. This is certain. *Pooja, Japa* and *Dhyana* are performed (mainly) with the body, the voice and the mind; and they excel each other in the above order.

Notes: *Pooja* is any ceremonial act of worship.

Japa is the repeated utterance of God's name or holy *mantras*, and is here used to include praise (*Stotra*).

Dhyana is meditation; pp. 11-13 explain the order.

5. எண்ணுரு யாவு மிறையுரு வாமென
வெண்ணி வழிபட லுந்தீபற
வீசனற் பூசனை யுந்தீபற.

5. Viewing this eight-fold universe as the expression or manifestation of God, whatever worship is performed is excellent worship of God.

Notes : 'Eight-fold',—the universe is said to consist of eight parts, *viz.*, of the five "elements" (ether, air, fire, water and earth) the Sun, the Moon and the *Jivas* (*i.e.*, individual souls). God manifests Himself as, in or through the Universe. The purest or iconoclast, in his anxiety to think of God as Pure Spirit, *i.e.*, as the exact opposite of matter or form, tries to avoid in his worship, any thought of the material universe and its forms. But what is the result? He thinks of God in terms of light, in the form of a dove, or of a person under a crown of thorns (typical of pain and sorrow), or as a powerful and benevolent father. Why? Spirit is known to us only through matter and its forms. The seeing spirit can only see through its own spectacles. Thought can issue out only in and through moulds of matter; and Symbolism and Anthropomorphism are inevitable. Human brains cannot escape the employment of forms in thinking of the formless spirit; and hence the universal use (acknowledged or unacknowledged) of forms in worship. Indiscriminate condemnation of such use betrays only ignorance and intolerance. Humanity needs forms and symbols for self-expression, especially in the field of religion, and the Deity in Its omnipresence, omniscience and kindness is sure to accept the devotion so expressed. The wise teacher, guide, or controller should only see to it that in the act or process of worship, the devotee's mind is made to rise from a perception of the narrow limitations, and petty features of the form or object used for worship, to a perception of God's spiritual nature, freedom from limitations, and other grand attributes. Processes employed vary widely; but, almost invariably, they include the *Avahana* (*i.e.*, Invocation) or "Practice of the Presence of God" in the object or place of worship. To the pious, that object (which others may view only as a piece of matter) is really Spirit,—is felt to be God.

The earnest devotee thinks and must think, while carrying on such worship, that God is immanent in the entire universe and every part of it; and if he actually realises His presence, the worship of the entire Universe (Virat Rupa) or parts (*e.g.*, a saint or an image) is undoubtedly worship (and a good form of worship) of God Himself. In order that the worship should be real and such as to reach God, there must be the actual feeling of God's presence with its usual concomitants or consequences, *e.g.*, awe and reverence (*mysterium tremendens*), or love, etc., which, at their intensity, result in absorbed (or "infused") contemplation. By such absorption, man becomes what he adores and loves. He is, in the ultimate analysis, himself but an idea or state of consciousness. So also is the object of worship. Intense contemplation and absorption assimilate, and fuse, *i.e.*, merge the two in one. And the object of all worship is to merge in the Blissful One.

6. வழுத்தலில் வாக்குச்ச வாய்க்குட் செபத்தில்
விழுப்பமா மானத முந்தீபற
விளம்புந் தியானமி துந்தீபற.

6. The repetition aloud of His name or *Mantra* is better than praise. Next comes faint mutter. But the best is the repetition within the mind—and that is meditation, above referred to.

Notes: The repetition of His name or *Mantra* is more helpful to concentration than elaborate praise which distracts at some stage. As concentration advances, the voice gradually sinks within. Then silence crowns it all.

'Meditation' may be on God, Personal or Impersonal, as a separate being or as the inmost core of oneself.

7. விட்டுக் கருதலி னாறுநெய் வீழ்ச்சிபோல்
விட்டிடா துன்னலே யுந்தீபற
விசேடமா முன்னவே யுந்தீபற.

7. Better than broken thought (meditation) is its steady and continuous flow like the flow of oil or of a perennial stream.

8. அனியபா வத்தி னவனக மாகு
மனனிய பாவமே யுந்தீபற
வனைத்தினு முத்தம முந்தீபற.

8. The lofty attitude "He is I" is preferable to the attitude "He is not I".

Notes: In the Sanskrit version of this poem, composed by Maharshi, he uses the phrase "is considered purifying" in place of "is preferable."* The Sanskrit

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* C.*f*. Bri. Up. I (4) 10. य एवं वेदाहं ब्रह्मास्मीति स इदꣳ सर्वं भवति. तस्य ह न देवाश्च ना भूत्या ईशते. आत्मा ह्येषाꣳ स भवत्यथ योऽन्यां देवता मुपास्तेऽसावन्योऽहमस्मीति न स वेद यथा पशुरेवꣳ स देवानाम्.

He who knows himself as Brahman, becomes all this Universe. Over him the gods have no lordship. He is their very Atma. He who worships any other (except the Self), regarding himself as different from that, knows not. He is but an animal (of sacrifice) to the gods.

"Soham", which means "He is I" is a well-known expression. It is used by the Advaitin to denote the unity and identity of that which is spoken of in the first person (I) and that in the third (He). Naturally, the second person and everything in the universe is also considered to be 'He' or 'That'—terms which the Advaitin uses frequently to denote *Brahman*—the Reality underlying everything. "Soham", thus in Advaitic practice, is the key mantra, constant meditation on which will help the individual to identify himself with the universal soul or Brahman, which identification or merger is the Advaitic conception of mukti (release) or salvation.

"Soham": or "He is I" and "Hamsah" or "I am He" are used by Dualists to express the intensity of Devotion which leads the devotee completely to forget himself or herself in intimate union with God, like the water of a river when it reaches the sea, or like salt in water—and this is the dualistic conception of mukti. A Gopi passionately loving Krishna forgot her identity for a time and declared that she was Krishna. So did Lord Gauranga.

Comparisons are often declared to be odious—especially if they are between the tenets and favourite practice of different sects. It may therefore be pointed out that Maharshi is hitting neither at the Dvaitins (Dualists) nor at the retention of the element of personality in worship. Maharshi himself began with devotion to Arunachala, the Hill of Light and has composed several devotional poems. Logical analysis of Personality no doubt implies elements that differentiate the person from all else. Yet there are ways of treating personality in worship so as to minimise or abolish those differences, c.f. Aksharamanamalai.* Dualists also have a very high place for "Non-Difference" as may be seen from the examples given above. The objections to some lower forms of personal worship are that they involve (1) interruption, (2) adulteration and (3) condition. Where none of these objections apply, the worship even by Dualists is in the form of Non-Difference and is excellent.

The attitude, "He is not I" is that of the ordinary worshippers, who are almost always dualists, in fact, whatever creed they may profess. Their mental constitution at their early stage leads them to value personality in God and in themselves. But some of these, by force of heredity, Guru's teachings, and, keep the Advaitic goal at the back of their minds, even from the beginning; and by force of suggestion, at long last, they move from their original Personal God to Impersonal worship, *i.e.*, transcend personality in their God and in themselves. This process is dealt with in the next verse.

9. பாவ பலத்தினாற் பாவனா தீதசற்
பாவத் திருத்தலே யுந்தீபற
பரபத்தி தத்துவ முந்தீபற.

9. Remaining in the Real Being, transcending all thought, through intense devotion is the very essence of Supreme Bhakti.

Notes: 'Bhakti' is Faith or Devotion. Thought involves a subject thinking, the object of thought and the thinking process, perceived as three distinct factors known as the *Triputi*. The highest reach of abstraction gets beyond these three and beyond the two (created soul and the creator) into the One. Maharshi in this and the previous stanza is connecting the two, Bhakti and Jnana, *i.e.,* Devotion and Illumination. As they are seen to be the same at the end of one's course, Maharshi often says that Bhakti is Jnana and Jnana is Bhakti—a truth clearly brought out by Sankaracharya's definition of Bhakti.

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* The first of the Five Hymns To Arunachala composed by Maharshi at the request and for the use of devotees.

स्वस्वरूपानुसंधानं भक्तिरित्यभिधीयते ।
स्वात्मतत्त्वानुसंधानं भक्तिरित्यपरे जगुः ॥

Vivekachudamani 32 & 33.

which means :

Concentration on the nature of the Self is said to be Bhakti by some ; others say it is Concentration on the truth of the Atman.

In these two stanzas, Maharshi shows how one who starts devotion with a sense of difference between himself and God, loses the difference, in the intensity of his mood, and arrives at non-difference. That is Jnana and that is the essence of the highest devotion.

10. உதித்த விடத்தி லொடுங்கி யிருத்த
லதுகன்மம் பத்தியு முந்தீபற
வதுயோக ஞானமு முந்தீபற.

10. "Absorption into the source" or core of Existence (or the Heart) is what the paths of Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana teach.

Notes: This maxim is in Chan. Up. III 14, 1 and *Brahma Sutra* I (1) 2. See footnote to page 14 ante.

The four paths are not mutually exclusive. Stanzas 1 to 9 deal with Karma and Bhakti ; 10 to 15 with Yoga ; and 16 to 28 with Jnana :

In Srimat Bhag. XI only three paths are said to exist *viz.*, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma.

योगास्त्रयो मया प्रोक्ता नृणां श्रेयोविधित्सया ।
ज्ञानं कर्म च भक्तिश्च नोपायोऽन्योस्ति कुत्रचित् ॥

Some go further and deny that Karma Marga is anything more than a step to the other paths.

" Be absorbed in the Source." The devotional mind of the Bhakta easily finds God Personal as the undoubted source of himself and of everything else and endeavours to get wholly absorbed in Him and thus he attains his goal. The analytical introverted Jnani with his strong leaning for Metaphysics proceeds to inquire into the source and nature of himself and all other things in the Universe, and arriving at the Ultimate Real underlying both, (Atman-Brahman) seeks to realise himself as That, *i.e.*, to merge or lose his finite individuality in That. The Yogi with a practical bent of mind turns to the details of Sadhana enabling the devotee or inquirer to concentrate on God Personal or the Impersonal Atman-Brahman and chalks out a course of self-discipline, the breathing exercises and other physical and mental steps that enable the mind to attain steadiness and absorption (*Samadhi*) in God or Atman-Brahman. The votary of the Karma Path also aims at that ultimate absorption and absorbs himself meanwhile in the performance of various acts that will take him to that goal. All these paths prescribe the formula—' Search and find the origin of yourself, and be absorbed in that.' Stanzas 11 to 14 deal

with absorption; and 19 to 21 deal with search for the source.

"*Source*": This term denotes the ultimate Real, the Brahman from which metaphysicians deduce the existence of everything. The definition of the term "Brahman" by Varuna to explain it to his son Bhrigu in order to enable him to discover it for himself with the help of such definition, ran thus: **यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायंते...** "Brahman is that whence all these creatures in the universe have issued, that whereon they are sustained and that into which they return," *i.e.*, source, stay and goal of the universe. Mostly this definition is regarded as indicating the Impersonal Absolute, the Real, Pure Consciousness and That alone. Some regard it as applying to Personal God; some apply it to both. After all, these slide into each other.*

For this term, *Source*, Maharshi uses the word "Hridaya", *i.e.*, 'Heart' in his Sanskrit version of this verse. But that term is nowhere used in this Tamil poem. Yet on account of its frequent use in religious (especially mystic) literature, we shall briefly deal with it here. 'Hrit' or 'Hridaya' is a Sanskrit word having different senses and the transition from one sense to the other is obviously due to the belief in their identity or close connection. The first sense of the word *Hridaya* is the organ known to Physiology as the blood propeller.

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* *c.f.* वदंति वेदविदस्तत् तत्त्वंयत् ज्ञान मद्वयम् ।
ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्द्यते ॥

i.e. Knowers of the Vedas call Pure Consciousness, which alone exists, the Real or the Truth. That is also termed Brahman, (by the Vedantins), Paramatma (by the Yogis and in Smritis) and Bhagavan (by the devotees).—*Srimat Bhagavata.*

This was (and even now is) identified with the central and essential activities of human existence and was treated as the central source of nerves radiating therefrom to all parts of the body. So another sense of the term Heart or *Hridaya* is that which is the essence of Human existence, *i.e.*, the Atman-Brahman, the ultimate and only Real of Advaitic Metaphysics [see Chan. Up. VIII (3) 3 and verse 20 of Sanskrit Up. Sara]. Thus the term has one use in Physiology and another in Metaphysics. Various thinkers and mystics have had a variety of experiences in their efforts to realise the bliss of merging themselves in the ultimate Real. For their mystic purposes they fixed and do still fix their attention on some spot in their chest, as the ultimate or temporary resting place of their ego. They have recorded their experience that alike in deep sleep and samadhi,* the Jiva or empirical ego was felt to sink into the central spot of the chest which they termed the heart.

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* Deep sleep and samadhi strongly resemble each other in a very important particular, *i.e.*, the disappearance (entire or practically entire) of the Ego consciousness, with the consequent blissful feeling of repose. In Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad they are described in the same or almost the same phrases. Bri. Ar. Up. II (1) 17 to 19 say that in deep sleep the Jiva previously full of conscious activity passes [along with Prana (life) sight, hearing and mind] into the 72,000 nerves, which pass from the heart and its pericardium and connect them with all parts of the body, and through those nerves into the Ether of the Heart, and blissfully rest there like a boy or a monarch or a Maha Brahmana. Chand. Up. VIII (6) 3 refers to the resting of the Jiva during deep sleep in those nerves, (*i.e.*, really in the heart to which they lead, see B.S. III (2) 7 to 9.)

Tait. Up. I (6) ; Katha. Up. VI 17, IV 12 6 ; III 12, Mundaka Up. III (1) 5, among numerous texts describe Brahman as residing in the ether of the heart or in the cave or in the body generally.

In many treatises it is stated that Jiva resides in waking in the brain and proceeds to the heart in deep sleep and joins with Brahman there in samadhi ; *c.f.* B. G. VIII 12, 10 & 13 ; X 20 ; XIII 31 & 33 ; XV 14 & 15 ; XVI 18 ; XVII 6 and XVIII 61.

The Bible (Ecclesiastes Ch. 10 verse 2) states that "A wise man's heart is at his right hand ; but a fool's heart at his left."

11. வளியுள் ளடக்க வலைபடு புட்போ
லுளமு மொடுங்கு முந்தீபற
வொடுக்க வுபாயமி துந்தீபற.

11. As birds are caught with nets, so by holding the breath, the mind is restrained and absorbed. This (breath-regulation) is a device for effecting absorption.

"The Sufi Mystics" (says Mr. Shushtery in his recent *Islamic Culture*, Vol. II p. 474) "are agreed in their view that Qalb or hearts are three, one physical on the left side, another called the animal soul, on the right side; and a third between the two, praised by Sufis as a spiritual faculty—a kind of mirror in which the Supreme Will is reflected. It is by keeping this heart pure from worldly attachment that a human being can approach the Creator. The real knowledge is God's illumination of this heart. The divine revelation to the Prophet is impressed on this heart. As is said in the Quran 'The faithful Spirit (*i.e.*, divine messenger) has descended with it (revelation), upon your heart that you may be of warners' Ch. XXVI 193-194."

The Hindu Sastras do not assign any place to the source of illumination. Yoga Vasishta V Upasama Prakarana Ch. 78 32-37 verses say that there are two hearts—one the gross which may be ignored (by the seeker after illumination) and the second, the Brahman which is taken by the Jiva (for the mystic purpose of realising itself by contemplation as the Blissful Real) as both inside and outside and neither inside nor outside the human body, *i.e.*, which may be taken to be either non-spatial or pervasive of all space, or residing at any particular spot. Maharshi's experience has been repeatedly stated by him, *viz.*, that the ego is felt to sink into the right side of the chest with something like a jerk when samadhi begins and to re-emerge from there at the cessation of samadhi, with a similar jerk.

Undue importance should not be attached to this location of the "Heart" or the variations therein. Each group following its own variation derives its usual and expected benefit. The "Heart" as signifying Brahman is the only matter of importance; and that though unconnected with space or the body is reached through mystic sadhana of some sort or other locating the mind or self in particular parts of the body.

Notes: Pranayama (breath-regulation) is a means and only one of the means adopted to secure a temporary lull in the mind's activity.

12. உளமு முயிரு முணர்வுஞ் செயலு
முளவாங் கிளையிரண் டுந்தீபற
வொன்றவற் றின்மூல முந்தீபற:

12. For, mind and life (*Prana*) expressed in thought and action diverge and branch. But they spring from a single root.

Notes: This verse explains how breath-regulation controls the mind. (*See pages* 13 & 14.)

13. இலயமு நாச மிரண்டா மொடுக்க
மிலயித் துளதெழு முந்தீபற
வெழாதுரு மாய்ந்ததே லுந்தீபற

13. Absorption has two forms, *viz.*, *Laya* and *Nasha*. That which is merely absorbed in *Laya* revives; if dead, it revives not.

Notes: *Laya* is temporary absorption; *Nasha* is permanent.

The absorption described in the 11th stanza is temporary. The spiritual aspirant cannot rest content with that. He must proceed to *Manonasha*, the permanent absorption, described in the 14th & 15th *verses.*

Manonasha, i.e., literally death of the mind does not really mean becoming insentient.

Manonasha means the loss of the present form of the mind with its narrow, obstructed and distorted vision preventing a person from seeing himself to be really the

Atman and forcing him to identify himself with the body more or less completely. The loss of that form is really a gain as it means the transformation of the finite and distorting mind into Pure Consciousness, Perfect Reality, the Atman or Brahman, embracing everything and leaving nothing outside Itself.

If the term *consciousness* in 'Pure Consciousness' is taken as necessarily implying the existence of "mind" in some form, then it may be correct to say that in the entire course from the noviciate to the state of realisation, a person is never without a mind.

In fact, we find, in religious literature, expressions referring to the mind of a jnani or Jivan Mukta. Great Saints themselves have given us personal hints on this matter that are of great value. They refer to their enjoyment of bliss in the Sat-Chit-Ananda state and declare it to be ineffable. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa explained, that the mind in that state was like a thin line drawn on water, having a fugitive existence, or like a rope burnt to ashes. Such a rope retains the form and appearance of a rope; but one cannot bind anything with it. Such a mind is described as *Suddha Satva.* Even this perhaps requires a slight modification, in view of the Gita statement* that there is nothing in existence without the admixture of the three Gunas. The description of the Saint's mind as in *Suddha Satva* is right because therein the Satvic element preponderates so overwhelmingly over the other elements as to drown them or blot them out of view, if not out of existence. The saint is so gentle, (*sarala*) so satvic. His will is surrendered. He has no attachment or desire and his deeds do not produce any vasana or bondage like those of worldly persons. There is a doctrine of "substantial compliance" in Spirituality as in Law. Neither Religion nor Law takes notes of trifles. Even in Physical Science, what is substantially a vacuum (*e.g.*, that obtained by an air pump) is treated as a vacuum and is found for all practical purposes to be a vacuum. This parallel may well be used in understanding the term "Satvic mind of the Jivan Mukta" and also perhaps the phrase "the jiva that without suffering extinction, transcends personality."

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* B. G. Ch. XVIII v. 40.

14. ஒடுக்க வளியை யொடுங்கு முளத்தை
விடுக்கவே யோர்வழி யுந்தீபற
வீயு மதனுரு வுந்தீபற.

14. When the mind can get absorbed, by breath restraint, then it will "die," (*i.e.*, its form will perish) if fixed to a single point.

Notes: The aspirant should not be content with Pranayama (breath regulation) which stills the mind only so long as the breath is held. He should proceed to "kill it." That is done by unflinching perseverance in concentration—on the Supreme.

"Death" of the mind (or even its temporary absorption) is termed *Samadhi*. The highest form of it is the permanent merger or union of the individual in the Brahman. All other forms are inferior. There is, however, a gradation among them. (1) *Sushka*, (*i.e.*, barren) Samadhi and Jada Samadhi are terms applied to certain types of voluntary trance or stupefaction of the senses and the mind, produced by psycho-physiological or spiritual gymnastics, in which however Atman, Brahman or Satchitananda is neither realised nor approached. Even this, if properly utilised, may be a good preparation for real and even the highest Samadhi.

Absorption of the mind is a fine art. But its value depends on what one is absorbed in. Absorption in a mathematical problem, in music, or in love has its value for the joy that it gives and for the preparation it affords for absorption in the Supreme. Absorption in one's *Ishta Devata* or Personal God (achieved mostly with the aid of images or other symbols such as light and fire) is really absorption in love—a refined or sublimated love—and is the next higher step. That is termed (2) *Savikalpa* Samadhi. So long as the mind perceives things other than itself it is having *Vikalpas* or differentiating processes. When these are narrowed down to a very few objects, *e.g.,* one's God with some attributes or His symbol, it is *Savikalpa* Samadhi. This, many devotees are enjoying in the course of their worship or other devotional exercises.

Very highly intense devotion, however, leads one to lose his individuality in one's God. Then it becomes (3) *Nirvikalpa* Samadhi—one shoreless sea of undifferentiated consciousness, which it is impossible to describe. We can only try to hint at it by saying that there one's self has become God, that God Personal has easily passed into His essential nature that is termed Impersonal Brahman and that the feeling at its threshold is that all differences appear, merely to be consumed and absorbed in unity, or do not appear at all.

When glimpses of such realisation are caught and enjoyed for a time and there is a return to the previous or preparatory state or stages, these glimpses are termed (3-a) *Kevala Nirvikalpa* Samadhi.

There the *Vasanas* (of the individual), though subdued for the time being, are still alive and they drag him back into the lower stages, and will continue to do so till they are thoroughly and completely extinguished.

After the exhaustion of the *Vasanas*, the individual (?) is in (4) the *Sahaja Nirvikalpa* Samadhi. He is in permanent realisation of the Self or Brahman, *Thanmaya Nishtha,** and there is no return from that state. What people call "his body" will remain living and active with its senses and intellect, till the course of action for which that body came into existence (*Prarabdha*) is over. But this is the view of the on-lookers. The realiser does not any more identify himself with that body or its activity and feels no attachment or concern with its activity or inactivity or the attendant pleasure or pain. This is what the next verse states:

15. மனவுரு மாயமெய்ம் மன்னுமா யோகி
தனக்கோர் செயலிலை யுந்தீபற
தன்னியல் சார்ந்தன னுந்தீபற.

15. The great yogi whose "mind is extinguished" and who rests in Brahman, has no karma, as he has attained his true nature (Brahman).

Notes: c.f. B. G. III 17, 18 Bri. Up. IV, (iv) 12. He feels no need or desire for Karma. When it is performed, he does not feel that he is the actor. The results do not affect him. So it is said that he has no Karma. The bondage of Karma does not affect its creator God,

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* Literally means being established in Being That.

Personal, or Impersonal nor the Self-Realiser in his *Thanmaya Nishtha,* state of realisation.

God's and Jivan Mukta's acts may seem to be like worldly persons' acts, but are really *sui generis,* and produce no such results, nor do they recoil ; *e.g.*, the first act of creation, subsequent acts of creation and incarnations (*Avataras*) are not the result of any previous Karma or *Vasana ;* nor do they produce any *phala* or *Vasana* affecting the freedom of God. *c.f.* B. G. IV 6, 13 & 24 IX 9 ; Y. S. I, 24. See Appendix C. The saint who has entirely surrendered his will to the Supreme says "I, yet not I, but the Supreme in me" ; or in the words of B. G. *Ch.* Verses 7 to 14, he lies secure and happy within, yet aloof from the body, quite unmoved and untouched by its Vasanas and consequent activities —realising that he is not the agent. Such a saint is referred to here as one that has 'lost his Ego or mind' and has escaped (*mukta*) karmic bonds.

The next and following verses proceed to show how the wise escape such bondage.

Where any activity produces, beyond the immediately intended results, ulterior results over-mastering the agent's will, *i.e.*, transforming him and subjecting him to unintended and undesired fruits and penalties entailing involuntary rebirth, it is termed bondage. Desire is its cause.

16. வெளிவிட யங்களை விட்டு மனந்தன்
னொளியுரு வோர்தலே யுந்தீபற
வுண்மை யுணர்ச்சியா முந்தீபற.

16. When the mind withdraws from external objects of sense and beholds (*i.e.*, engages in mystic introspection

of) its own effulgent form, that is true wisdom. *c.f.* B.G. VIII, 12, etc.

Learning should not be mistaken for wisdom. Much learning is a weariness to the flesh and may, by its distraction, prevent peace of mind. Not so, wisdom. There can never be a surfeit of wisdom. Learning is occupied with study of things external to oneself. If a man should study the whole world or even gain it, of what use is it, unless he studies and masters himself ? Even to get real knowledge of the world, one must know himself. Self-knowing is the chief duty and interest of man,—is wisdom. This is commonsense and the wisdom of philosophy.

This verse has a further significance. Maharshi is not teaching here Psychology and Philosophy of Religion, though what he teaches is connected with them. To learn such science or philosophy, one must pursue the well-known scientific methods of observation, experiment, framing of tentative hypotheses and checking the result of their application with well known facts with a view to correct or develop such hypotheses. Maharshi, on the other hand, is proceeding on different lines here. The ancient mystics of this land, the Rishis, pursued their scientific research, and applied their conclusions to reach the result they desired. The goal sought was bliss, the highest bliss welling up from within and forming the bottom layer or rather essence of man ; and the method adopted was mystic introspection—which was no doubt based on certain Psychological and Philosophical truths about self, God and the Universe. The highest bliss was declared to be one's reaching identity with the Real substratum of the Universe and of oneself, described as

Sat-Chit-Ananda. The process of reaching involved the affirmation of some positions of Psychology and Philosophy which were reached according to the science of their days. The scientific accuracy of those positions may be disputed and perhaps disproved. Yet still the mystic and blissful result which the ancient seers reached can be, is being, and will be reached exactly as it was in their days. Verses 17 *et seq*. deal with some of the positions taken or used in that process of mystic introspection. While reading these, an ordinary reader will be well advised, if he is anxious to secure the bliss of mystic realisation, not to be puzzled about their relation to the facts, and doctrines of modern Psychology and Philosophy and the question whether the latter corroborate, or contradict the former or leave them untouched.* Even if there should be any contradiction in the positions, that does not and cannot affect the indubitable experience of bliss resulting from the use of the old positions, according to the time honoured method. Even variations of that method like that adopted by Tennyson (see page 14 *supra*) produce the same result. It is of the utmost importance for learned readers to remember that we are not now proceeding here to deal with the Psychology or Philosophy of the self according to modern methods ; but only dealing with a peculiar art involving a single element of applied Psychology and Philosophy,—applied for the discovery of Bliss, one's Real Nature. That art based on the fundamental nature of man and his environment still holds good, and, so far as we can see, will hold good for ever.

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* There is no suggestion here that the old positions embodied in V. 17 *et seq*. have in fact been demolished or weakened by modern Science or Philosophy. Nor is any competent scholar or expert dissuaded here from examining the old positions in the new light. The only point made here is that such examination is not necessary for reaping the benefit of Maharshi's (Upadesa) teaching; and, if made by all and sundry, might unsettle the faith of some and prevent their deriving the full benefit of that teaching.

17. மனத்தி னுருவை மறவா துசாவ
மனமென வொன்றிலை யுந்தீபற
மார்க்கநே ரார்க்குமி துந்தீபற.

17. When the mind unceasingly ponders over its own nature, it transpires that there is no such thing as mind. This is the straight course for all.

18. எண்ணங்க ளேமனம் யாவினு நானெனு
மெண்ணமே மூலமா முந்தீபற
யானா மனமென லுந்தீபற.

18. The mind is merely thoughts. Of all thoughts, the thought "I" is the root. (Therefore) the mind is only the thought "I".

Notes: The thought "I" is also known as ego, self-consciousness, ahankar, the feeling of one's personality. 'Thoughts' means mental phenomena. When any thought arises, seek its root by asking "To whom does this thought arise?" "Who thinks this?"—The answer is "I" a person. There is no thought without a thinker. So the thinking person "I" is the root of thought.

19. நானென் றெழுமிட மேதென நாடவுண்
ணான்றலை சாய்ந்திடு முந்தீபற
ஞான விசாரமி துந்தீபற.

19. 'Whence does this "I" arise?' Seek this within. This "I" then vanishes. This is the pursuit of Wisdom.

Notes: The next question to ask yourself is 'Who is this "I"?' What sort of entity is it—(the caused or uncaused, finite or infinite)? *Whence does it arise?* By introspection, try to see how and where this thought "I" begins. The result is that what formerly appeared as a distinct individual person "I" who entertained the thought, disappears and is seen no more.

Here a reader may suddenly rouse himself up and ask 'what is this *Harikari* that is going on?' Dr. Guillotin after getting innumerable victims' heads chopped off by his all-devouring guillotine, himself fell a victim to it. Are we suffering the same fate by following the seemingly heartless advice of the English poet:—

> "..........................Die,
> If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
> Follow where all is fled..........."

or that of the sage who ordered **"येन त्यजसि तत्त्यज"** *i.e.*, give up or surrender that (mind or ego) with the aid of which you have surrendered everything else?

In the words of Maharshi, the stick (ego) which helped in cremating various other bodies by pushing them into the funeral blaze (*Jnana Vichara* or Quest of Wisdom) is itself in the end burnt up in the same blaze. Are we then ending in utter annihilation? Is that possible?

We find the answer to these questions in the following stanzas which reassure us of the truth proclaimed in B. G. II. 15, that the one fundamental Real abides ever, while all else, with a mere phenomenal existence, must change and pass away, *i.e.*, that he who wishes to escape from the turmoils of earthly strife, or *samsara* or succession of births and deaths must retreat into his impregnable citadel by recognising or realising the truth of his Being as the One Real, the Pure Atman or Brahman.

20. நானொன்று தானத்து நானானென் றொன்றத்து
தானாகத் தோன்றுமே யுந்தீபற
தானது பூன்றமா முந்தீபற.

20. Where the "I" vanished, there appears an "I, I" by itself. This is the Infinite (*Poornam*).

Notes : Is there then a blank after the loss of the feeling of one's individual personality? No. The one supersensible *Being* that underlies this appearance, 'I', and all other unreal appearances, i.e., Brahman (*Poornam*), appears in place of the 'I', and covers not one individual 'I' only, but all. Hence it is denoted by the expression 'I, I' denoting the merger or absorption of the individual and particular in the universal. Is this annihilation? No.

> "The dewdrop slips into the Shining Sea."
> The tiny spark rejoins the Eternal Flame.

21. நானென்னுஞ் சொற்பொரு ளாமது நாளுமே
நானற்ற தூக்கத்து முந்தீபற
நமதின்மை நீக்கத்தா லுந்தீபற.

21. This is always the true import of the term "I". For we dot not cease to exist even in the deepest sleep, where there is no waking "I".

Notes : The term 'I' as ordinarily used denotes one with waking consciousness. However even in deepest sleep there is continuity of consciousness, as on waking up, a person remarks 'I enjoyed sound sleep all these hours'. That proves the necessity for stretching the 'I' wider, *i.e.*, beyond waking consciousness. Proceeding thus, to see what "I" or personality is, one arrives at the Atman-Brahman as its real basis or nature.

Here the argument of the poem is a little knotted as the Upanishads themselves are when they treat of the *Sushupti*—deep sleep state. Some [*e.g.*, Bri. Up. II (1) —17 IV (3) 19, 21, 23] treat it as identical with the state of Pure Consciousness or Perfect Self-Realisation. But most authorities [*e.g.*, Chan. Up. VIII (3) 2*, Tait. Up. II 8, III (10) 5 and Karikas v. 15 on Mand. Up. VII and B. S. III (2) 7-9], affirm that the deep sleep state is, after all, one of the states of the individual soul in which he is still clothed over with Ignorance—though that state is the happiest of the three and makes the nearest approach to Self-Realisation. In Self-Realisation, it is all Pure Consciousness; no ignorance can linger there. In fact, it is a piece of unfortunate necessity to call it a state at all, for Self-Realisation is the unique Self, the Atman-Brahman, the one Real wherein no difference is possible between a Person or object and His or Its State, between attribute and substance, between knowing and being,—knower, knowing and known. In "deep sleep" the Jiva is very much dimmed and burns like a bed-room light, with wick low down, just twinkling and keeping up minimum activity. It is hardly noticeable. Still it is there. Touch it and like a snake it will uncoil itself and spread out its flaming hood. It has power of enjoyment, a bit of memory and a preference of its own, to respond to some stimuli more readily than to others. Assuredly deep sleep is below even the lowest samadhi, wherein the soul is absorbed in some form leading to the Real, and, of course, far below the highest Advaitin's Samadhi, *i.e.*, Sahaja Nirvikalpa, which is the same as perfect Realisation. Here the argument is that Brahman is lurking behind the "I", whenever people use that term or thought denoted by it. It laughs from behind, so to speak, when a waking individual talks of "I am doing this or I thought that, or I won this battle" and sometimes may demonstrate their error to the individuals or Gods concerned (See Kena. Up. III 14-26). This applies not merely to their waking use of the term. The "I" occurs in their dreamy sleep—which is mostly a disorderly reproduction of waking and perhaps long forgotten experiences. Even there that "I" is but a mask for the Brahman. In deep sleep, "I" still continues though in a very attenuated form,—so attenuated as to account for its being commonly, though inaccurately, described as the state without the Ego. And even that Ego is a Pretender and not the Real. It pretends to be Bliss, but its lack of illumination and its short life prove that it is an Imposter and not the Real, Brahman-Atman. The Atman Knows that and everything; but the deep sleep "I" knows next to nothing. So Maharshi sums all this up and says in his first line, "the Reality that lurks behind the 'I' always, *i.e.*, in all the three states, is this 'I', the pure and perfect consciousness".

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* "Like persons that walk over the surface of a land under which treasure is buried, unaware of that treasure, people daily go to that world of Brahman, but do not get into it, being prevented by Anrita, *i.e.*, their ignorance."

A corollary has been drawn from the above stated fact. In the Briha. Up., it is asserted that when an object, *e.g.*, a wife or a son attracts our love, the only reason for it is that attraction and lovability are the nature of the Atman-Brahman underlying. See Br. Up. IV, 5.

22. உடல்பொறி யுள்ள முயிரிரு ளெல்லாஞ்
சடமசத் தானதா லுந்தீபற
சத்தான நானல்ல வுந்தீபற.

22. The body, senses, mind, life (*Prana*) and ignorance (*Avidya or Sushupti*) are all insentient and not the Real. I am the Real (*Sat*). These (sheaths) I am not.

Notes : In stanza 19, the question of the origin (and therefore the nature) of "I" is raised. Here the question is pursued further. What am I ? There is a hazy feeling that any object perceived outside this 'my body' is not-I, and that 'I' inheres in this body. Am I then the limbs, the organs ? No. I exist without them after amputation or when I lose (this food sheath) the whole body in sleep or death. Am I the life-breath (Prana) ? No. I survive that also, in cases of suspended breathing or in death. Am I the mind and intellect regulating it (*Manas* and *Vijnanam*) ? No. The personality survives when madness or disease takes away the mind and reason. Am I then the feeling of ease or bliss in deepest, *i.e.*, dreamless sleep where all functions of body and mind are at rest and where only the unillumined (*i.e.*, ignorant) components of the unconscious remain ? No. Not even that. As I feel that I am and that I am conscious, 'I' cannot be ignorance or anything unillumined. What then am I ? 'I' am what remains after all these sheaths are removed. I am that which is, Sat, Being ; I am that which is conscious, Chit. As Anandam or happiness is that which is beyond pleasure and pain and these inhere in these rejected sheaths, 'I' am past all pleasure and pain ; 'I' am Anandam (happiness).

23. உள்ள துணர வுணர்வுவே றின்மையி
னுள்ள துணர்வாகு முந்தீபற
வுணர்வேநா மாயுள முந்தீபற.

23. As there is no second being to know that which is, 'that which is' is conscious. We are that.

24. இருக்கு மியற்கையா லீசசீ வர்க
ளொருபொரு ளேயாவ ருந்தீபற
வுபாதி வுணர்வேவே றுந்தீபற.

24. Creatures and Creator do both exist. They are (alike and) one in Being. Their differentia are the degrees of their knowledge and other attributes.

25. தன்னை யுபாதிவிட் டோர்வது தானீசன்
றன்னை யுணர்வதா முந்தீபற
தானா யொளிர்வதா லுந்தீபற.

25. When the creature sees and knows himself without attributes, that is knowledge of the Creator, as the Creator appears as no other than the *Self*.

26. தானா யிருத்தலே தன்னை யறிதலாந்
தானிரண் டற்றதா லுந்தீபற
தன்மய நிட்டையீ துந்தீபற.

26. To *know* the Self is to *be* the Self,—as there are not two separate selves. This (state) is *Thanmaya Nishta.*

Notes: *Thanmaya Nishta* literally means 'Abiding as That.' That is Brahman or Real Being.

27. அறிவறி யாமையு மற்ற வறிவே
யறிவாகு முண்மையீ துந்தீபற
வறிவதற் கொன்றிலை யுந்தீபற.

27. That '*knowledge*' is (real) knowledge which transcends both knowledge and ignorance. There is no object to be known 'There.'

Notes : In the state of realisation of Brahman, Unity prevails. The idea that 'I know this' or 'am ignorant of that,' cannot enter there. There is no second entity to *know* in that realisation.

28. தனாதியல் யாதெனத் தான்றெரி கிற்பின்
னனாதி யனந்தசத் துந்தீபற
வகண்ட சிதானந்த முந்தீபற.

28. When one's true nature is known, then there is Being without beginning and end ;—It is unbroken Awareness-Bliss.

Notes : 'There', there is no difference and hence no beginning nor end. What is realised may be described as existence, consciousness and happiness (*i.e.*, absence of pleasure and pain as set out in the note to stanza 22) Sat-Chit-Anandam.

29. பந்தவீ டற்ற பரசுக முற்றவா
றிந்த நிலைநிற்ற லுந்தீபற
விறைபணி நிற்றலா முந்தீபற.

29. Remaining in this state of Supreme Bliss past all thoughts of bondage and release is abiding in the service of the Supreme.

Notes : To those beginning with the path of Bhakti, this culmination may appear as self-surrender to the Supreme. Any worship or service thereafter rendered will be ego-less as the will or soul is absorbed in God or Brahman. Among sadhakas, before reaching their goal or end, conflict of views arises sometimes. Some contend that Bhakti by purifying the mind, intensifying concentration, and bringing about Non-difference (between Jiva and Iswara or God) of one sort serves as the means for Jnana and is nothing more. Others contend that Jnana by revealing God's infinite beauty, power and other loveable attributes is the means for strengthening Bhakti and is nothing more. Maharshi reconciles the combatants by pointing to the end. Here, at the end, all apparently divergent paths coalesce. The highest reach of Bhakti is the same as the highest realisation of Jnana as in both cases, the finite desire-bound ego has been surrendered or destroyed and the only survivor is the Imperishable Supreme.

30. யானற் றியல்வது தேரி னெதுவது
தானற் றவமென்று னுந்தீபற
தானும் ரமணேச னுந்தீபற.

30. The Realisation of That which subsists when all trace of "I" is gone, is good *Tapas*. So sings Ramana the Self of all.

The Jnani may not appear to a superficial observer as a Tapasvi; but in fact, he is the greatest of Tapasvis, as his Tapas as spontaneous Awareness of the Self is constant, bereft of the least trace of individual effort. The process of ridding oneself of the Ego also is very severe *tapas*—involving the sacrifice of everything including the sacrificing self—an excellent form of *tapas*.

Cf. (1) तस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः (2) तपसाब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व तपोब्रह्म (Brahman's) austerity, in the form of Jnana or Self-Realisation. (2) Realise Brahman by austerity. Austerity is Brahman. Tait. Up. III, (2).

UPADESA SARAM

(*Rendered into Verse*

by

ALLEN CHADWICK *of Sri Ramanasramam.*)

1. Karma must ever yield its proper fruit,
For thus it is ordained by God, Himself,
Supreme Creator. Then is Karma God ?
No, for it is itself insentient.

2. Of Karma the results must pass away,
Yet it leaves seeds which in their turn sprout forth
And throw the actor back into the flood
Of Karma's ocean. Karma cannot save.

3. But acts performed without attachment's urge
And solely for the service of the Lord
Will cleanse the mind and indicate the way
Which leads at length unto the final goal.

4. Worship, reciting of God's Holy Name,
And meditation, mainly are performed
By body, voice and mind, and they excel
Each other in the order here set down.

5. If we but recognize this Universe
Of eight-fold form as form of God, Himself,
And serve in adoration all the world,
This is of God most excellent worship.

6. Constant repeating of the Holy Name
Is more than praise, at length the voice will sink
To silent repetition in the Heart,
And in this way is meditation learnt.

7. Better than meditation that recurs
In broken fits and starts is that which is
A steady ceaseless flow, like to the course
Of falling oil or a perennial stream.

8. Worship of God as in no way distinct
From him who worships, or in other words
Thinking that "He is I", is better far
Than any other kind of worshipping.

9. To rest in the Real Being, that transcends
Our very thought, by reason of the strength
Of our devotion to something conceived;
This of supreme devotion is the truth.

10. To be absorbed again into one's Source
Is Karma, Bhakti, Yoga, Jnana, all
These things in truth. Or put in other words
Is Work, Devotion, Union, Wisdom, too.

11. As by the fowler birds are caught in nets
So by the holding of the breath within
The mind can be restrained. This a device
Which will effect absorption of the mind.

12. For mind and life, expressed in thought and act
That is with thought and action as their function,
Diverge and branch like two boughs of a tree,
But both of them spring from one single stem.

13. Suppression of the mind in two ways comes
Absorption and extinction ; mind absorbed
Will live again, but mind which is destroyed
Will never more revive, for it is dead.

14. When, by the means of restraint of the breath,
The mind has been controlled, then make it flow
Along a single current, that achieved,
Its form will then entirely disappear.

15. For the Great Sage for whom all form of mind
Has disappeared and who is ever one
With the Reality, there is no Karma more,
For He, indeed, the True Self has become.

16. When mind has given the sense-objects up
Which are external and has drawn within,
And has perceived its own refulgent form,
Then verily alone True Wisdom is.

17. When pondering with constant vigilance
Upon the actual nature of the mind
One finds that there is no such thing as mind ;
This, of a truth, is the straight course for all.

18. The mind is nothing but a lot of thoughts,
Of all these many thoughts 't is the thought, 'I'
That is the root. So we can see by that
The mind in truth is only the thought 'I'.

19. Whence therefore, does this 'I-thought' have its birth ?
With vigilant and ever active mind
Seek this, and crestfallen the 'I' becomes.
The search, itself, the quest of Wisdom is.

20. This search pursued till 'I' has disappeared
There now shines forth the 'I-I' all alone,
The quest is finished, there's no more to seek,
For this is truly the Infinite Self.

21. This is eternally the true import
Of the term 'I.' For in the deepest sleep
We do not cease to be, we still exist
Even though here, there is no sense of 'I.'

22. As I am Pure Existence, I am not
The body nor the senses, mind nor life,
Nor even ignorance, for all these things
Are quite insentient and so unreal.

23. As there is not another consciousness
To know Existence, it must follow that
Existence must itself be consciousness.
So we ourselves are this same consciousness.

24. In their real nature as Existence both
Creatures and the Creator are the same,
The unique Principle. In attributes
And knowledge only is a difference found.

25. Realization of the Self alone,
Eliminating all its attributes,
Is God-Realization of a truth,
As it is He that shines forth as the Self

26. To be the Self, that is to know the Self,
As there is no duality in Self;
This is Thanmaya-Nishta, or the state
Of absolutely being That in truth.

27. That knowledge is true knowledge which
transcends.
Knowledge and ignorance both equally,
And this alone is truth. For there is no
Subject or object there that can be known.

28. If one can only realize at Heart
What one's true nature is, one then will find
That 't is infinite Wisdom, Truth and Bliss,
Without beginning and without an end.

29. Remaining in this state of Supreme Bliss,
Devoid of bondage and of freedom too,
Is found to be a state in which one is
Wrapt in perpetual service of the Lord.

30. By ardent search and shedding ego's veil
Realize the Self, the One that's ego-less,
And function thus ; the sole right penance this.
So teaches Bhagavan Sri Ramana,
Who is the Self of everything that is.

OM ! TAT ! SAT !

उपदेश सारः

कर्तुराज्ञया प्राप्यते फलम् ।
कर्म किं परं कर्म तज्जडम् ॥ १ ॥

कृति महोदधौ पतनकारणम् ।
फलमशाश्वतं गतिनिरोधकम् २ ॥

ईश्वरार्पितं नेच्छया कृतम् ।
चित्तशोधकं मुक्ति साधकम् ॥ ३ ॥

कायवाङ्मनः कार्यमुत्तमम् ।
पूजनं जप श्चिन्तनं क्रमात् ॥ ४ ॥

जगत ईशधी युक्तसेवनम् ।
अष्टमूर्तिभृ द्देवपूजनम् ॥ ५ ॥

उत्तमस्तवा दुच्चमन्दतः ।
चित्तजं जप ध्यानमुत्तमम् ॥ ६ ॥

आज्यधारया स्रोतसा समम् ।
सरलचिन्तनं विरलतः परम् ॥ ७ ॥

भेदभावना त्सोऽहमित्यसौ ॥
भावनाऽभिदा पावनी मता ॥ ८ ॥

भावशून्यस द्भावसुस्थितिः ।
भावनावला द्भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥ ९ ॥

हृत्स्थले मनः स्वस्थताक्रिया ।
भक्तियोगवोधाश्च निश्चि तम् ॥ १० ॥

वायुरोधना ल्लीयते मनः ।
जालपक्षिव द्रोधसाधनम् ॥ ११ ॥

चित्तवायव श्चित्क्रियायुताः ।
शाखयोर्द्वयी शक्तिमूलका ॥ १२ ॥

लयविनाशने उभयरोधने ।
लयगतं पुन र्भवति नो मृतम् ॥ १३ ॥

प्राणवन्धना ल्लीनमानसम्
एकचिन्तना न्नाशमेत्यदः ॥ १४ ॥

नष्टमानसो त्कृष्टयोगिनः ।
कृत्यमस्ति किं स्वस्थितिं यतः ॥ १५ ॥

दृश्यवारितं चित्तमात्मनः ।
चित्त्वदर्शनं तत्त्वदर्शनम् ॥ १६ ॥

मानसं तु किं मार्गणेकृते ।
नैव मानसं मार्ग आर्जवात् ॥ १७ ॥

वृत्तयस्त्वहं वृत्तिमाश्रिताः ।
वृत्तयो मनो विद्ध्यहं मनः ॥ १८ ॥

अहमयं कुतो भवति चिन्वतः ।
अयि पतत्यहं निजविचारणम् ॥ १९ ॥

अहमि नाशभा ज्यहमहंतया ।
स्फुरति हृत्स्वयं परमपूर्णसत् ॥ २० ॥

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ईशजीवयो र्वेषधीभिदा ।
सत्स्वभावतो वस्तुकेवलम् ॥ २४ ॥

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आत्मसंस्थितिः स्वात्मदर्शनम् ।
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ज्ञानमस्तिकिं ज्ञातुमन्तरम् ॥ २७ ॥

किं स्वरूपमि त्यात्मदर्शने ।
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बन्धमुक्त्यती तंपरंसुखम् ।
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अहमपेतकं निजविभानकम् ।
महदिदंतपो रमणवागिय ॥ ३० ॥

APPENDIX A

U. Sara	Sources : Parallels ; other books, etc., dealing with the same topic.
Verses 1 & 2	B. G. III 9-12, 13 सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा „ IV 13 न बध्यते 37, 41.
3	„ IV 20, 24, 31. V 10. IX 27. XI 55. II 47 to 51. XVIII 49.
5	B. G. VII 4. VI 30, 31. XVIII 61, 62. VII 20, 21. XI 7, 47, 54 worship of other Gods, images, etc. IX 23, 24.
6	
7	„ VI 19 यथादीपोनिवातस्थो
8	Bri. Up. I (4) 10. Manasa Pooja by Sankar सोहंभावेन पूजयेत् Maharshi's Aksharamanamala.
9	Vivekachudamani 32 & 33. B. G. XI 54.
10	Chan. Up. III (14) 1. Tait. Up. III (1) B. S. I (1) 2 and all other references quoted at page 49.
11	B. G. IV 29. VIII 10, 12.
14	„ VIII 14.
15	B. G. III 17, 18. Bri. Up. IV (iv) 12. IV 37. XVIII 17. Ashta. G. XVIII 25-29.
16	„ X 20. XVIII 61. VIII 12.

19 Yoga Vasishtha :
Annapoornopanishad I 49.
Mahopanishad IV 21.

रामस्वात्म विचारोयं कोहं स्यामिति रूपक ।
चित्तदुर्द्रुम वीजस्य दहने दहनस्स्मृत ॥

22 Sankaracharaya's Atmabodha... V. C....

24 कार्योपाधिरयं जीवः कारणोपाधिरीश्वरः ।
कार्यकारणतां हित्वा पूर्णबोधोऽवशिष्यते ॥

27 & 29 Ashta. G. XVIII 78, 72.

30 Tait. Up. III (2).

APPENDIX B

Asht. G. —Ashatavakra Gita.
B. G. —Bhagavad Gita.
B. S. —Brahma Sutras.
Bhag. —Srimat Bhagavata Puranam.
Bri. Up. —Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad.
Ch. Up. —Chandogya Upanishad.
Khat. Up. —Khata Upanishad.
Ken. Up. —Kena Upanishad.
Mand. Up.—Mandukya Upanishad.
Mund. Up.—Mundaka Upanishad.
Svet. Up. —Svetasvatara Upanishad.
Tait. Up. —Taittiriya Upanishad.
Up. Sara. —Upadesa Saram.
Y. S. —Yoga Sutra.
Y. V. —Yoga Vasishtha.

APPENDIX C

Karma, its sub-divisions ; and how they are destroyed.

Karma produces its results, *viz.*, Phala and Vasana (see p. 7 ante). The Vasana begins at once and runs on till it is counteracted or destroyed. The phala, as a rule, begins to operate, not in the same birth in which the Karma is done, but in later births. Exceptions to this rule are (*a*) where the agent is doing Nishkamya Karma and may have no future births to face the phala or fruit ;—in this case, the phala is enjoyed or seems to be enjoyed (where the jiva has no sense of being an agent) in the present body, and (*b*) where the action is extremely wicked or very highly virtuous, in which case the fruit is reaped in the same birth and very quickly.

Karma has three sub-divisions :

(1) '*Kriyamana*,' is that which has been done, is being done or is to be done in the present birth. The phala or fruit of these is to be reaped in later births though the resulting vasanas have to be faced at once.

(2) *Sanchita* (*i.e.*, accumulated), is the Karma done in previous births—excepting Prarabdha.

(3) 'Prarabdha' is that portion of *Sanchita*, which has borne, is still bearing and is to bear fruit in this birth.

Regarding the bearing or enjoying the fruit of Prarabdha most authorities say प्रारब्धकर्मणां भोगादेव क्षयः Rama Gita X 10, 29. The arrow let loose from the bow must run its course and cannot be recalled. For purposes of practical sadhana and in the view of onlookers, this is true. We shall see how this statement has to be qualified.

Regarding destruction of Karma Vasanas, the obvious course is to counteract the same by directing the mind and soul to a *Lakshya, e.g.,* God, which will repel all vasanas. The force of past vasanas is thus checked, and gradually may fade away—perhaps after many births. But there is one step that must act as a guillotine on all vasanas and phalas, *viz.,* the extinction of the Jiva or ego by merger in the Supreme—which is done in (*a*) Bhakti Marga by Prapatti, *i.e.,* Surrender, leading to union with God, *i.e.,* Sayujya ; and in (*b*) Jnana Marga, by concentration and Atma Jnana or Brahma Jnana. In both these cases, there is no more ego for the Karma Vasana or Karma Phala to act upon. These may affect the body of the devotee or jnani till it drops off in Videha Mukti. But the devotee ascribes the enjoyment or pain to Iswara, as the jnani, to Prakriti. Both are actionless. Hence B.G. says :

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्व कर्माणि भस्मसात् कुरुते

i.e., The Fire of jnana burns up all Karma to ashes.

Sanchita cannot take effect as a jnani has no future births. Kriyamana does not arise as a jnani has no sense of agency.

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्महविः ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणाहुतं ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गंतव्यं ब्रह्म कर्म समाधिना ॥

—B.G. IV 24.

i.e., The giving is Brahman. So is the oblation, the fire, the sacrificer, and the goal to be obtained by action and Samadhi relating to Brahman.

The devotee is equally safe in the arms of Ishwara who is beyond Karma or even Time. Says God Krishna :

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

—B. G. XVIII, 66.

i.e., Give up all ideas of Duty. Seek refuge in Me alone and I shall see to your Salvation from all sin.... Have no grief.

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायंत उपासते ॥
तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि न चिरात् पार्थ मय्यावेशित चेतसाम् ॥

—B.G. XII 6 & 7.

i.e., Those who give up all action to Me and being wholly devoted to Me, worship Me, meditating on Me with unswerving attention, fixed on Me and Me alone, I lift them up from the ocean of Samsara and Death.

There are numerous and thrilling assurances, similar to the above in the Gita and Srimad Bhagavata, encouraging everyone to betake himself to God and surrender to Him, or if one is so constituted to surrender oneself into the Impersonal Brahman. No sort of Karma can have any operation after Prapatti or Atma Jnana.

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